



2009–2010 NATIONAL HEAD START

FELLOWSHIPS

FUNDED BY THE ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
OFFICE OF HEAD START



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Office of Head Start
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
8th Floor
Washington, DC 20024

February 2009

Head Start stands alone as the most important educational and social investment in children, families, and communities that our nation has ever undertaken. Launched in 1965 as a comprehensive child development program, Head Start has provided a beacon of hope and support to more than 24 million low-income children and their families across the United States.

Head Start has also been widely recognized as a leader in early childhood education and our nation's laboratory for pioneering knowledge and promising practices for children and families. Head Start has set standards for program quality that have raised the bar for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers across the country.

In keeping with this tradition of leadership, a new and exciting dimension was added to Head Start in 1996—the National Head Start Fellowships Program. The Fellowships program brings together experienced and energetic professionals who support the Office of Head Start in such areas as policy, program development, quality assurance, child development, health, family and community partnerships, and program management.

The Fellows bring a local perspective to the national office and gain an understanding of policy and advocacy at the national level. The professional development aspect of the National Head Start Fellowships Program expands the skills of emerging leaders in Head Start and contributes to the overall quality of leadership in the early childhood field. At the end of the fellowship year, Head Start Fellows apply their new skills and knowledge to enhancing quality services for children and families at the local, state, and national levels.

As we look forward to the challenges and opportunities facing us in the field of early childhood education, the National Head Start Fellowships Program is developing a cadre of leaders who have the experience and skills to make substantial contributions in behalf of the children and families of today and tomorrow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patricia E. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "P" and "B".

Patricia E. Brown
Acting Director

2009–2010 NATIONAL HEAD START FELLOWSHIPS

THE NATIONAL HEAD START FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM was established in 1996 to create a new cadre of leaders in Head Start. The Fellowship brings together experienced and dedicated professionals who support the Office of Head Start in developing and implementing long-term quality improvement initiatives.

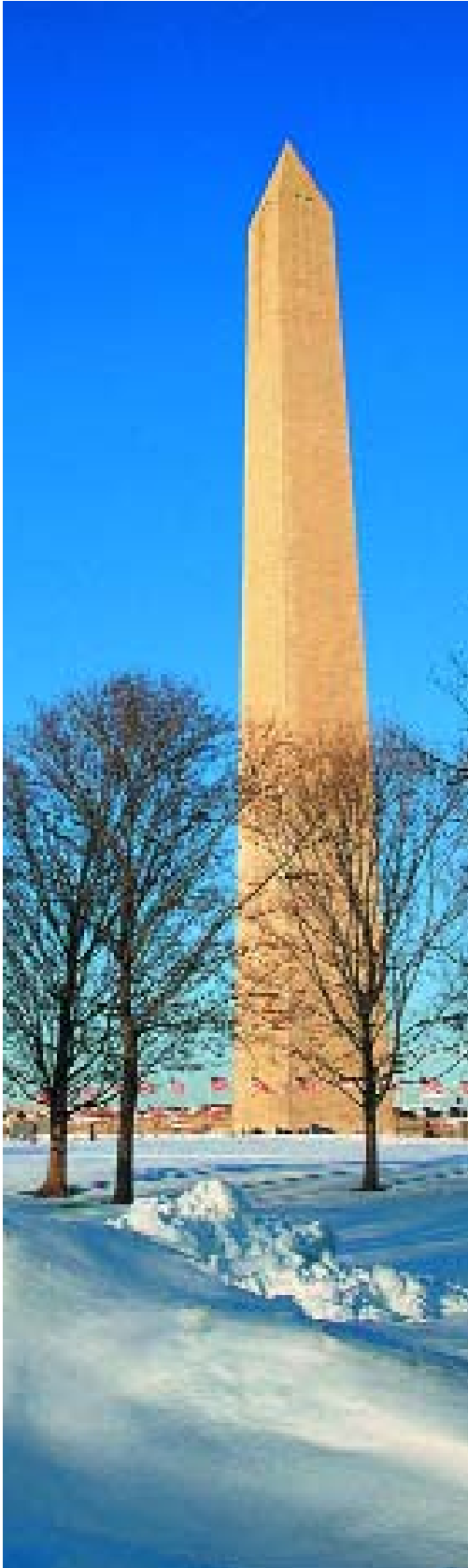
Supported by the Office of Head Start (OHS), the National Head Start Fellowships Program provides funding for up to ten Fellowships each year. Through these Fellowships, outstanding leaders in the Head Start community have the opportunity to gain first-hand experiences that offer a national perspective into the operations of OHS and other Federal programs serving children and families. The 12-month Fellowships commence in October 2009 and end in September 2010.

The National Head Start Fellowships offer a multifaceted work experience. Fellows spend their year in full-time positions with the Office of Head Start, contributing their special skills and perspectives from the field to support national initiatives and priorities. Fellows work side-by-side with senior managers, policymakers, and researchers. Assignments demand a high level of professionalism, a capacity for learning quickly, and a willingness to be a team player. Fellows assume important responsibilities within the Office of Head

Start. Their work often involves conducting analyses, preparing reports, drafting position papers, reviewing research findings and proposed legislation, assisting with policy analysis, and participating in strategic discussions about services to children and families. Flexibility and adaptability are key to a successful Fellowships experience.

In addition to work assignments, the Fellows take part in professional educational and leadership development programs. Fellows attend day-long seminars that enable them to convene as a group and explore national issues with senior government officials, nationally recognized experts, community leaders, and innovative early childhood program practitioners. These seminars provide opportunities for Fellows to practice and refine their leadership skills. Each Fellow has a Mentor who facilitates participation in meetings with nationally recognized professionals and assists in establishing a personal network of contacts. Fellows also are provided opportunities to network with past Fellows who often provide valuable insights on how to maximize the Fellowship experience and survive the challenges of working within a national bureaucracy.

The National Head Start Fellowships Program is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start.



WORK ASSIGNMENT

THE WORK ASSIGNMENT is central to the National Head Start Fellowships Program, presenting each Fellow with ever-changing issues and challenges that promote personal and professional growth.

Work assignments in Washington, D.C. are determined by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Head Start, on the basis of OHS needs and Administration priorities, as well as Fellows' expressed interests, skills and goals. Fellows receive a stipend and benefits, including health insurance, through the Office of Head Start's National Head Start Resource Center.

Head Start Fellows have the opportunity to provide briefings on their Fellowship experiences. They are required to submit monthly reports that describe their activities, achievements, and insights, and that raise issues for OHS consideration. In addition, each Fellow keeps a journal and submits a final report on his or her experiences.

At the end of the Fellowship year, Fellows return to their communities more experienced in policy, planning, and decision-making because of their national experience. Fellows are also better positioned to play a leadership role in providing comprehensive support to children and families.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT of the National Head Start Fellowships Program augments and amplifies the work experience. Fellows participate in a process that assesses, supports, and builds leadership skills. The leadership development process involves meeting informally with experts in fields both within and outside of their job assignments to discuss issues of national importance, opportunities for skill development and practice, and current research and theory.

One of the goals of the program is to establish a Fellowship class environment that offers both diversity and cohesiveness and serves to challenge Fellows to broaden their horizons. Indeed, what Fellows learn from each other is an essential dimension of the program. To facilitate this, there are opportunities for Fellows to network with one another throughout the year.



SELECTION CRITERIA

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, Office of Head Start, supervises the selection process. Candidates are sought who demonstrate experience with Head Start, substantial content area expertise, and high levels of personal and professional achievement.

The purpose of the Fellowships program is to enhance the ability of Head Start Fellows to make significant contributions to their programs and the broader early childhood community. Those selected must have in-depth knowledge of Head Start and a demonstrated commitment to children and families. The legislation also stipulates that Federal employees are ineligible for consideration as Head Start Fellows.

The selection process seeks to establish a cohort of individuals whose diversity broadens the horizons of each Fellow. Overall geographic diversity—urban and rural—as well as a mix of academic disciplines and career experiences are considered. Since the program is designed to nurture leadership, professional growth potential is also a criterion in the selection process.

There are no restrictions on age, race, sex, creed, national origin, nor any physical requirements. The Fellowships program maintains a strictly bipartisan tradition.

APPLICATION CALENDAR AND PROCEDURE

APRIL 1, 2009

Application deadline. The application package must be postmarked on or before this date to be considered. An initial review of the application for compliance with the application requirements and preliminary assessments is then conducted.

MAY 2009

Approximately 15 candidates will be named National Finalists.

These individuals will be invited to interviews with the Office of Head Start in Washington, D.C. Travel expenses will be paid by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start.

JUNE 2009

Awards of up to 10 Fellowships will be announced.

AUGUST 2009

The Fellows will participate in a Housing Search in preparation for their move to Washington, D.C.

OCTOBER 1, 2009—

SEPTEMBER 30, 2010

Inclusive dates of 2009-2010 Fellowship year.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the National Head Start Fellowships Program, please contact Jean Swift, Fellowships Coordinator, Head Start Resource Center, at 703.247.8303 or via e-mail at jswift@pal-tech.com.

Please send application materials to—

National Head Start Fellowships Program
c/o Jean Swift
Pal-Tech, Inc.
1000 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1000
Arlington, VA 22209

National Head Start Fellowships Application

INSTRUCTIONS

Type all responses. Answer all questions fully and sign the application in the space provided in Part III, Certification. Return the original and *three* (3) copies of the entire application package, including attachments, along with the envelopes containing the letters of reference, to Pal-Tech, Inc., postmarked by the deadline.

Part I should be answered in the space provided on the application form. (These pages may be photocopied or recreated on a word processor; however, the format and size must remain *exactly* the same.) The envelopes with your recommendations are also required.

Please use plain white 8½" x 11" paper for any attachment in Part II that requires a sheet of paper. Each sheet should include your name, address, and the question number in the upper-right corner.

You may include additional items as attachments with your application, such as publications featuring or authored by you. Use your best judgment.

Applications for the 2009-2010 Fellowship are accepted during normal working hours of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, on or before the established deadline date at the address below. If mailing an application, sending it by courier or overnight delivery, or if hand delivering it, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the package is postmarked on or before the deadline date of April 1, 2009.

Applications should be addressed to Pal-Tech, Inc, c/o Jean Swift, National Head Start Fellowships, 1000 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1000, Arlington, VA 22209.

The Federal government and its contractors are equal opportunity employers. Appointment to a Fellowship is based on qualifications and performance, regardless of race, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

National Head Start Fellowships Application

PART I - General

1. Personal Data

NAME (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE)

☐ Mr. ☐ Mrs. ☐ Ms. ☐ Other

OTHER NAMES USED

Are you a U.S. citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No

BIRTHDATE (MONTH/DAY/YEAR)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

OCCUPATION: (PROFESSION, STUDENT, SELF-EMPLOYED, RETIRED, ETC.)

HOME ADDRESS: STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

HOME PHONE WORK PHONE

E-MAIL ADDRESS

CURRENT EMPLOYER'S NAME

CURRENT EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS: STREET

CITY

STATE ZIP

YOUR JOB TITLE OR STATUS

E-mail address where you wish to receive correspondence, if different from above:

PERSONAL E-MAIL ADDRESS

activities in civic or professional organizations, and at least one should be your present supervisor, if applicable. The individual completing each reference should return the form to you along with the letter of reference. These references must be included in your application. **Your application cannot be considered without these references.**

NAME (1)

ADDRESS: STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE

NAME (2)

ADDRESS: STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE

NAME (3)

ADDRESS: STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE

NAME (4)

ADDRESS: STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE

2. References and Evaluation

There are two steps to preparing references. First, list references and include contact information for a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 4 persons who know you well. Second, reproduce and give the enclosed candidate evaluation form to those individuals.

Those providing a reference should have direct knowledge of your qualifications and character. At least one person listed should have professional competence in your field, at least one should have knowledge of your professional accomplishments, at least one should have knowledge of your voluntary

3. Personal Declarations

Please answer the following questions and explain on a separate sheet of paper details and resolution of any question answered “yes.”

Have you ever been discharged from the Armed Forces under other than honorable conditions?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you delinquent on any Federal debt?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you ever been suspended, disciplined, or barred from any occupation or practice by any regulatory agency, professional association, or organization because of your conduct?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you currently a Federal employee? (By law, Federal employees are ineligible for Head Start Fellowships.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

PART II - Attachments

4. Educational Background

On a separate sheet of paper, type the heading “Educational Background” and *list* all schools attended since high school. List the degree or diploma earned, the name of each school, and its location.

EXAMPLE

M.P.A., Mega University, Anytown, USA, 8/89–6/90

B.S., Elk College, Psychology, Anothertown, USA, 8/86–6/89

5. Work Experience

On a separate sheet of paper, type the heading “Work Experience” and *list* information about your employment history. Work back from your current position, account for all employment that is relevant to the Fellowships Program, and describe large gaps in time. *Do not substitute a résumé.* You may use as many sheets as required. Use the following as a guide:

Dates of employment

Exact job title

Employer

Employer’s address and telephone number

Nature of the “business”

Current salary (for current position only)

Number of workers you supervised

For each, you may provide a brief narrative description of work you performed, not to exceed 200 words for your current position and 100 words for each previous position. Describe any outstanding contributions made by you and list any citations, awards, or outstanding promotions.

EXAMPLE

6/94–present

Parent Services Coordinator

ABC Child Care Center

1234 C Street, Anytown, USA 54321

909-444-4321

Adult education and parent involvement

Paid \$33,000/year

Supervise 2 part-time family advocates

6. Voluntary Activities and Community Involvement

On a separate sheet of paper, type the heading, “Voluntary and Community Involvement Activities,” and *list* each (those activities not part of your job and for which you are not paid). Provide the types of information given in the following examples.

EXAMPLES

The Bay City Urban League - Project ADVANCE

Bay City, USA

Provide teen parents with career education and job placements, using volunteer counselors

Co-founder of project; currently secretary-treasurer of the advisory committee

8/93–present

Community Leader of the Year Award

Sunshine County Head Start Association

Sun City, USA

Training and participation for Head Start parents and teachers, advocacy, and inter-agency cooperation

Chair of the training committee

1994–present

7. Most Significant Achievement

On a separate sheet of paper, type the heading, “Significant Achievement,” and then describe in 200 words or fewer what you consider to be your most significant achievement—either as a professional or in community service.

8. Essay

On a separate sheet of paper, type the heading, “What I Would Hope to Gain From a Head Start Fellowship.” Compose an essay of 300 words or fewer on that topic.

9. Essay on one of three issues

On a separate sheet of paper, type the heading, “Issue Essay” and address **one** of the following questions in **500 words** (one page) or less: (1) Discuss Head Start’s role in the current early care and education environment; (2) Identify a new requirement of the Head Start Act that you believe poses a challenge, and discuss a possible strategy (or strategies) for responding; or (3) Discuss possible strategies for supporting local programs around specialized services (such as disabilities, dual language learners, or any other area you think appropriate).

PART III - Certification

I certify that all of the statements made in this application are true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and are made in good faith. I know and understand that any or all items contained herein may be reviewed by the Administration for Children and Families and are subject to investigation or verification. I consent to the full release of all information concerning my capacity and fitness by employers, educational institutions (who are authorized to release my academic records), law enforcement agencies, and other individuals and agencies to duly accredited investigators of the Federal government for that purpose.

SIGNATURE (IN INK)

DATE

Application Checklist As Appropriate. Did you . . .

- ☐ Complete all items on this form?
- ☐ Enclose all attachments?
- ☐ Include letters of recommendation?
- ☐ Sign the Part III Certification in ink?
- ☐ Include the original *plus* three (3) copies of the application package, including attachments?
- ☐ Make an additional copy of the application package for your records?
- ☐ If mailing, provided sufficient postage for your application package?

This checklist is intended as a helpful aid, but it does not encompass all details or requirements of the overall application. Read all materials carefully!

Privacy Act and Public Burden Statements

Information provided by applicants will be used only in the selection of National Head Start Fellows to participate in this program, and to support program management functions, including designing training and making appropriate work placement assignments.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, an agency may not conduct or sponsor and no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 24 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0046), Washington, DC 20503.

OMB NO. 0970-0140

National Head Start Fellowships Application

Candidate Evaluation

To: _____
INDIVIDUAL COMPLETING EVALUATION

From: National Head Start Fellowships Program

Subject: _____
APPLICANT'S NAME

Thank you for taking time to write a recommendation for the Fellowships applicant named above. Your candid and specific responses to the questions below will help the Office of Head Start select the next class of Fellows who will participate in an intensive one-year program of full-time work supplemented by leadership training and mentoring.

Please answer the following questions (on your office letterhead, if appropriate), and include your daytime telephone number. Please sign and date your evaluation and return it to the applicant. The applicant must submit your evaluation as part of his or her application.

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant?
2. What are the applicant's major strengths?
3. What impact has the applicant had on his or her professional field?
4. What impact has this individual had in the community, outside his or her professional realm?
5. How would you describe this candidate's communication skills?
6. How would you describe this candidate's leadership skills?
7. How would you describe this candidate's analytical skills?
8. What would you expect this candidate to gain from a Head Start Fellowship?
9. What would you expect this candidate to be doing in five years?

The National Head Start Fellowships Program seeks to provide skilled and highly motivated individuals with first-hand experience in the process of leadership in the Executive Branch of the Federal government and to instill a sense of personal commitment for contributing to the quality of programs and policy for young children and their families. The National Head Start Fellowships Program is managed by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the Office of Head Start, 1250 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20024.